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## Statement Regarding US District Court Ruling Freezing NIH Funding of Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research

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SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — The leadership of CIRM, the state stem cell agency, deplores the decision of U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth to freeze federal funding of all human embryonic stem cell (hESC) research. This decision will disrupt the advances that are happening across the country to bring hESC-based therapies to patients in need.

Under this decision, even research using on the hESC lines approved by President George W. Bush will be halted.

However, CIRM will continue to fund research on all hESC lines recognized by the Bush administration as well as newer lines approved by the National Institutes of Health during the past eight months. This points to the importance of CIRM's California model of sustained funding in this field that promises to create thousands of jobs in California as well as improved therapies for patients in Californian and around the world.

With federal funding uncertain, CIRM will continue providing a stable source of funding for those researchers who have committed their labs to pursuing new therapies based on work with human embryonic stem cells. Through this ongoing funding, CIRM expects to be able to continue to leverage California's investment through its Collaborative Funding Partners, grant-making agencies in seven countries and Maryland and New York.

"The decision is a deplorable brake on all stem cell research," said CIRM president Alan Trounson. "Many discoveries with other cell types, notably the so-called reprogrammed iPS cells, would not happen without ongoing research in human embryonic stem cells. This decision leaves CIRM as the most significant source of funding for human embryonic stem cells in the U.S.

Pioneering work on four "Disease Teams" CIRM funded last fall using hESC lines will not be interrupted by this court order. Each of those teams is working within a time commitment to file for permission to begin a clinical trial within four years. Those four teams provide hope for patients with stroke, type1 diabetes, age-related macular degeneration (blindness), and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease). It is critical for the millions of patients suffering from these diseases, along with paralysis and other areas under development with hESCs, that this research not be delayed.

"It would be immoral to unnecessarily delay the critical medical research that is vital for human embryonic stem cell therapies to reach patients suffering from chronic disease and injury," said Robert Klein, chairman of the CIRM governing board. "We must remember that the microscopic cells used for this research would otherwise be thrown away by in vitro fertilization clinics, by couples that had finished their family planning."

CIRM will also continue to fund research with other types of stem cells, particularly progenitor cells that can create many cell types and other pluripotent cells such as induced Pluripotent Stem cells (iPS cells). However, it is important to note that work in all these cells types requires insights gained through work with hESCs to proceed with maximum efficiency. hESC research informs the entire field.

About CIRM CIRM was established in November 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 364 research, training and facility grants totaling more than \$1 billion, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. Estimates suggest that these grants already awarded will generate tens of thousands of job-years of employment in the state.

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